

Perform Preventive Maintenance

Preventive maintenance makes sense.

Accidents happen. Hazardous waste spills, fires and explosions can result in serious injuries, significant property damage and expensive clean-up costs. That's why the Dangerous Waste Regulations (Chapter 173-303 WAC) require that you pay special attention to the way you handle your hazardous wastes.

You need to make sure your business facility is designed, constructed, maintained and operated in a manner that reduces the possibility of a hazardous waste accident.

This means taking a fresh look at each of your hazardous waste activities on a regular basis, and saying "What if?" What if, for example, the cover for the spent solvent container is not replaced after adding the last batch of solvent wastes?

- ♦ Could the spent solvent be evaporating into the work area, creating a health concern to employees?
- ♦ What would happen if someone bumped into the open container?

You can and **must** take steps to reduce the odds of a hazardous waste accident happening at your business.

Do you have the required equipment?

Keep the following emergency equipment on hand and accessible to employees, unless you can demonstrate that it is not necessary:

- ♦ an internal communications or alarm system that signals an emergency for employees;
- ♦ a phone, hand-held 2-way radio or other device to call local police departments, fire departments or emergency response teams;
- ♦ portable fire extinguishers and other fire control equipment;
- ♦ spill control equipment;
- ♦ equipment cleaning and decontamination after the emergency; and
- ♦ enough water at an adequate pressure to supply any sprinkler or water spray systems.

One of the most common reasons for a relatively minor hazardous waste incident turning into a major emergency is that access to and from the area is blocked.

Is there enough aisle space?

Maintain enough aisle space throughout your operation so that employees can get out and emergency personnel and equipment can get in.

Have you made arrangements with local authorities?

It's important to identify and work with local authorities **before** an accident occurs so that everyone who may be involved in responding to the emergency is prepared.

Prepare a simple letter for the police, fire departments and emergency response teams with the following information:

- ♦ layout of your building(s) and property, and places where employees would normally be working;
- ♦ hazards and characteristics of the dangerous waste(s) you have on the premises; and
- ♦ entrances and possible evacuation routes.

Provide local hospitals with a written description of the:

- ♦ characteristics of dangerous wastes on the premises, and
- ♦ types of illnesses and injuries that could result from fires, explosions or spills at your business.

Document any arrangements and keep them on file. If state or local authorities decline to enter into these kinds of arrangements with you, keep a record of this, too. The last thing you want to do is set up a great preventive maintenance program and then have it fail because your spill kit was empty or the hospital wasn't informed of the hazards of a new waste. Do you review your preventive maintenance program regularly?

Develop and follow a written schedule for inspecting all:

- ♦ monitoring equipment,
- ♦ safety and emergency equipment,
- ♦ security devices, and
- ♦ operating and structural equipment.

Record the following information in an inspection log:

- ♦ the date and time of the inspection,
- ♦ name and signature of the inspector,
- ♦ notes on your observations, and
- ♦ the date and description of any repairs taken (fix any problems noted on an inspection as soon as possible).

Conduct a yearly review of the areas where you store ignitable or reactive wastes accompanied by a:

- ♦ professional person familiar with the Uniform Fire Code, or
- ♦ local, state or federal fire marshal.

Test and maintain your emergency equipment regularly to make sure that it works properly in an emergency.

Review your arrangements with local authorities to keep them up to date.